AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Previously Presented) A television set-top box, comprising:

a tuner for receiving signals representing television programming and delivering the signals representing television programming to a display interface;

a central processor;

a bar code reader, operatively coupled to the central processor, to read bar codes, wherein the bar codes represent product identifying information;

program means, running on the central processor, for receiving bar code information from the bar code reader;

a communication device, operatively coupled to the central processor, suitable for sending and receiving data over a communication medium;

wherein the program means communicates with the communication device to send information obtained from the bar code reader to a server residing at a television service provider headend in order to register the product with a plurality of vendors subscribing to a product registration service provided by the television service provider; and

wherein the television service provider server associates the product with a plurality of vendors, receives data from the vendors associated with the product and sends the data associated with the product to the communication device.

2. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the television service provider provides an alias address to the vendors, wherein the alias address is associated with the set-top box.

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising means for receiving messages addressed to the alias address.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising means for rejecting messages directed to the alias address.

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5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the data received from the service provider comprises offers for products or services associated with the bar code.

6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the data received from the service provider comprises uses for a product associated with the bar code.

7. (Previously Presented) A method of obtaining quotes, comprising:

at a set-top box, submitting a request for quote (RFQ) to a television service provider headend, the television service provider headend having a quote server;

at the service provider headend quote server, correlating the RFQ with a plurality of vendors;

at the service provider headend quote server, resubmitting the RFQ to the plurality of vendors;

at the service provider headend quote server, receiving a plurality of quotes from vendors; and

at the service provider headend quote server, forwarding the quotes to the set-top box for communication to a subscriber.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 7, further comprising, at the set-top box sending a message to the service provider to accept a quote from one of the plurality of vendors.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 8, further comprising, at the service provider, notifying the one of the plurality of vendors of the acceptance of the quote and of the identity of the subscriber.

10. (Original)   The method according to claim 7, wherein the submitting is carried out by navigating a hierarchical menu system to identify a product or service required, and submitting the RFQ from the menu system.

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11. (Original)   The method according to claim 10, wherein the menu system comprises selections for obtaining quotes, registering products and obtaining information.

12. (Original)   The method according to claim 7, wherein the subscriber is identified to vendors at the time of submission of the RFQ only by an RFQ identifier.

13. (Original)   The method according to claim 7, further comprising charging a subscription fee to the subscriber to permit submission of the RFQ.

14. (Original)   The method according to claim 7, further comprising charging a per use fee to the subscriber to permit submission of the RFQ.

15. (Original)   The method according to claim 7, further comprising charging a subscription fee to the vendors to receive the RFQ.

16. (Original)   The method according to claim 7, further comprising charging a per use fee to the vendors to receive the RFQ.

17. (Original)   The method according to claim 8, further comprising charging a fee to the vendor receiving the acceptance.

18. (Original)   The method according to claim 8, further comprising charging a fee to the subscriber as a result of receiving the acceptance.

19. (Currently Amended)   A method of registering a product, comprising:
    at a set-top box, submitting product registration data to a television service provider;
    at the television service provider, entering the product registration data into a database;
    at the television service provider, matching the product registration data to a plurality of vendor registrations submitted by a plurality of vendors;

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at the television service provider, sending the product registration data to a plurality of matching vendors;

at the television service provider, receiving a plurality of ~~plurality~~ submissions from the plurality of matching vendors; and

forwarding the submissions to the set-top box for communication to a subscriber.

20. (Original)   The method according to claim 19, wherein the subscriber is identified to the matching vendors only by an alias.

21. (Original)   The method according to claim 19, further comprising filtering advertisements out for vendors selected by the subscriber.

22. (Original)   The method according to claim 19, further comprising charging a fee to the vendors for submitting vendor registrations.

23. (Original)   The method according to claim 19, further comprising charging a fee to the vendors for forwarding the submissions.

24. (Original)   The method according to claim 19, further comprising charging a fee to the subscriber for submitting product registration data.

25. (Original)   The method according to claim 19, further comprising charging a subscription fee to the subscriber to allow submission of product registration data.

26. (Original)   The method according to claim 19, wherein the submitting of the product registration is carried out by navigating a hierarchical menu system to identify a type of product to be registered, and entering product detail.

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27. (Original)   The method according to claim 26, wherein the product detail is entered by scanning a product code with a bar code reader associated with the set-top box.

28. (Original)   The method according to claim 19, wherein the submitting of the product registration is carried out by navigating a hierarchical menu system and entering product detail by scanning a product code with a bar code reader associated with the set-top box.

29. (Currently Amended)   A method of obtaining information, comprising:

at a set-top box, submitting a request for information to a television service provider headend in the form of a product registration;

at the television service provider headend, receiving the request for information, entering the product information into a database residing on a server at the television service provider headend, and transmitting the request for information to a plurality of vendors;

at the television service provider headend, receiving a plurality of vendor submissions supplied in response to the request for information and matching the request for information with the plurality a plurality of vendor submissions;

at the television service provider headend, sending the sending product registration data to a plurality of matching vendors, wherein the product registration data identifies the set-top box initiating the request for information by an alias;

at the service provider, receiving a plurality submissions from the plurality of matching vendors; vendors; and

at the television service provider headend, sending the plurality of vendor submissions to the set-top box for communication to a subscriber; and

at the set-top box transmitting filter information to the television service provider headend, wherein the filter information is used to block subsequent transmissions from a specified vendor.

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30. (Original)   The method according to claim 29, further comprising charging a fee to the vendors for submitting vendor submissions.

31. (Original)   The method according to claim 29, further comprising charging a fee to the vendors for sending the submissions.

32. (Original)   The method according to claim 29, further comprising charging a fee to the subscriber for submitting a request for information.

33. (Original)   The method according to claim 29, further comprising charging a subscription fee to the subscriber to allow submission of requests for information.

34. (Original)   The method according to claim 29, wherein the submitting of request for information is carried out by navigating a hierarchical menu system to identify information desired.

35. (Currently Amended)   A television set-top box, comprising:
        a tuner for receiving signals representing television programming and delivering the signals representing television programming to a display interface;
        a central processor;
        a product identification reader, operatively coupled to the central processor, to read a product identifier, and
        program means, running on the central processor, for receiving information from the product identification reader
        a communication device, operatively coupled to the central processor, suitable for sending and receiving data over a communication medium;
        wherein the program means communicates with the communication device to send information obtained from the product identification reader to a server residing at a television service provider headend in order to register the product with a plurality of

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vendors subscribing to a product registration service provided by the television service provider; and

wherein the television service provider server associates the product with a plurality of vendors, receives data from the vendors associated with the product and sends the data associated with the product to the communication device.

36. (Previously Presented)   The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the television service provider provides an alias address to the vendors, wherein the alias address is associated with the set-top box.

37. (Previously Presented)   The apparatus according to claim 36, further comprising means for receiving messages addressed to the alias address.

38. (Previously Presented)   The apparatus according to claim 37, further comprising means for rejecting messages directed to the alias address.

39. (Previously Presented)   The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the data received from the service provider comprises offers for products or services associated with the product identifier.

40. (Previously Presented)   The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the data received from the service provider comprises uses for a product associated with the product identifier.

41. (Original)   The apparatus according to claim 35, wherein the product identification reader comprises a bar code reader, and wherein the product identifier comprises a bar code.

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